

## Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 LUSAKA 01672 101135Z  
ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 W  
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O 101029Z MAY 78  
FM AMEMBASSY LUSAKA  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 8374  
INFO AMEMBASSY LONDON IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L LUSAKA 1672

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS  
TAGS: PDEV RH UK  
SUBJ: RHODESIA: THE NEUTRAL CHAIRMAN

REF: (A) LONDON 7294; (B) STATE 117300

1. WHILE I AGREE WITH LONDON'S COMMENTS PARA 3 REFTEL A, BELIEVE THERE ARE OTHER CONSIDERATIONS TO BE TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT:  
-- THERE IS AN ADVANTAGE TO THE PF AND FRONTLINE'S UNDERSTANDING THAT THE BRITISH ARE NOT EAGER TO REASSUME RESPONSIBILITY IN RHODESIA (AS DISTINGUISHED FROM COOLNESS TO THE ANGLO-AMERICAN PROPOSAL BASED ON PRESUMED SUPPORT FOR THE MODERATES IN THE INTERNAL AGREEMENT). AS LONG AS THE UK CONTINUES TO EXPRESS ITS WILLINGNESS TO PROVIDE A RESIDENT COMMISSIONER, AN EXPRESS-ION OF FLEXIBILITY IN TRANSFORMING THE POSITION INTO A "NEUTRAL CHAIRMAN" CAN STRENGTHEN OUR BARGAINING POSITION ON OTHER MATTER AT ISSUE IN THE PROPOSAL.  
-- OWEN MAY BE RIGHT THAT THE SUBSTITUTION OF ANOTHER NATIONAL FOR BRITISH COMMISSIONER WOULD BE THE FACE-SAVING DEVICE SMITH COULD POINT TO IN MOVING BACK TOWARDS THE AAP.

2. THE CONCEPT OF A NEUTRAL CHAIRMAN, OF COURSE, WOULD CHANGE THE NATURE OF THE PROPOSAL BRINGING IT CLOSER TO THE NAMIBIA  
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CONCEPT. BUT IT HAS ALREADY BEEN MODIFIED IMPORTANTLY BY INTRODUCTION OF POWER SHARING THROUGH A GOVERNING COUNCIL. FLEXIBILITY PARTICULARLY TOWARDS IDEAS THAT BOTH RHODESIAN PARTIES SUPPORT IS IMPORTANT.

3. AS AN ALTERNATIVE SUGGESTION THEREFORE RATHER THAN AS A SUBSTITUTION, THE CONCEPT SEEMS TO ME TO HAVE VALUE.

4. AS THE DEPARTMENT IS AWARE, OWEN ALREADY USED THE TERM  
"OR NEUTRAL CHAIRMAN" IN REFERRING TO THE RESIDENT COMMISSIONER  
DURING THE MEETING WITH THE PF AND FRONTLINE IN DAR.  
LOW

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## Message Attributes

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**Concepts:** POLITICAL SETTLEMENT, INTELLIGENCE ASSESSMENTS  
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**Decaption Date:** 20 Mar 2014  
**Decaption Note:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
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**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Date:** 20 Mar 2014  
**Disposition Event:**  
**Disposition History:** n/a  
**Disposition Reason:**  
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**Review Markings:**  
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